



BERKS COUNTY ELECTION SERVICES
Phone: 610-478-6490

INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES AND CIRCULATORS – 2023

First day to circulate and file nomination petitions.....	February 14, 2023
Last day to circulate and file nomination petitions	March 7, 2023
First day to circulate and file nomination papers.....	March 8, 2023
Last day to file objections to nomination petitions.....	March 14, 2023
Last day for withdrawal by candidates who filed nomination petitions	March 22, 2023
Last day to REGISTER before Primary Election.....	May 1, 2023
Last day to apply for a mail- in or civilian absentee ballot.....	May 9, 2023
Last day to receive voted mail-in and civilian absentee ballots	May 16, 2023
MUNICIPAL PRIMARY.....	May 16, 2023
First day to register to vote after the Primary.....	May 17, 2023
Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas absentee ballots (submitted for delivery no later than 11:59 P.M. on May 15).....	May 23, 2023
Last day to circulate and file nomination papers.....	August 1, 2023
Last day to file objections to nomination papers	August 8, 2023
Last day for candidates who filed nomination papers to withdraw.....	August 8, 2023
Last day for withdrawal by candidates nominated at the Primary.....	August 14, 2023
Last day to REGISTER before the Municipal Election	October 23, 2023
Last day to apply for mail-in or civilian absentee ballot.....	October 31, 2023
Last day to receive voted mail-in and civilian absentee ballots	November 7, 2023
MUNICIPAL ELECTION.....	November 7, 2023
First Day to Register after November election.....	November 8, 2023
Last day for County Board of Elections to receive voted military and overseas absentee ballots (submitted for delivery no later than 11:59 P.M. on November 6).....	November 14, 2023

NOTE: ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

<u>OFFICE</u>	<u>SIGNATURES</u>	<u>FEE</u>	<u>TERM</u>	<u>FILE</u>
County Wide	250	\$100	4 yrs.	Berks County
City Wide	100	\$25	4 yrs.	Berks County
City Council District	10	\$25	4 yrs.	Berks County
Magisterial District Judge (may cross file)	100	\$50	6 yrs.	Berks County
School Director – Reading (may cross file)	100	None	4 yrs.	Berks County
School Director – County (may cross file)	10	None	4 yrs.	Berks County
(Upper Perkiomen and Boyertown Region 3 School Directors file in Montgomery County)				
(Twin Valley School District Regions 2 & 3 file in Chester County)				
Borough Office	10	None	4 yrs.	Berks County
First Class Townships Colebrookdale, Cumru, and Muhlenberg	10	None	4 yrs.	Berks County
Second Class Township	10	None	6 yrs.	Berks County
Township Auditors	10	None	6 yrs.	Berks County
Borough Auditors	10	None	6 yrs.	Berks County

IF YOU ARE PRINTING NOMINATION PETITIONS FROM THE ELECTION SERVICES WEBSITE, PLEASE NOTE THAT ALL NOMINATION PETITIONS MUST BE PRINTED AS DUPLEX (**TWO-SIDED, FRONT AND BACK, HEAD-TO-HEAD**) ON PLAIN WHITE 8 ½" X 11" (LETTER SIZE) PAPER.

THIS REQUIREMENT **CANNOT** BE SATISFIED BY PRINTING EACH SIDE OF THE DUPLEX NOMINATION PETITION ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF 8 ½" x 11" PAPER AND AFFIXING THE TWO SHEETS TOGETHER WITH A STAPLE OR PAPER CLIP. **FAILURE TO REPRODUCE THE NOMINATION PETITION FORMS CORRECTLY WILL RESULT IN THE REJECTION OF THOSE FORMS!**

CANDIDATES CAN OPT TO PICK UP PETITION PACKETS IN THE ELECTION SERVICES OFFICE. THE ELECTION SERVICES OFFICE IS OPEN MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY FROM 8AM – 5PM.

NOTE: *The Berks County Election Services office cannot and will not provide legal or accounting advice. All candidates and/or voters are strongly advised to solicit advice from a licensed professional in the appropriate field in advance of statutory deadlines and before filing documents with this office.*

These instructions are strictly introductory in scope and should not be construed as legal advice. Candidates and/or voters are responsible for ensuring the correctness and completeness of all documents. The Berks County Election Services office is not responsible for errors and omissions on the part of a candidate and/or voter.

1. PRIOR TO CIRCULATION

- a. All blank spaces, which appear at the top of each nomination petition, must be completed **BEFORE** signatures are obtained.
- b. Write or print clearly, the name of the candidate on the face of the nomination petition **exactly** as you wish it to appear on the official ballot. Avoid the use of nicknames; the candidate's name as registered to vote should be used.
- c. Check with your local governing body to determine what offices should appear on the ballot. If an unexpired term of office is appearing in your municipality, be sure to designate whether the term is for 2, 4 or 6 years.

2. SIGNERS

- a. Each signer may sign nomination petitions for as many candidates for each office as *he/she is permitted to vote for*, and no more. Make certain that each signer of a petition is a registered voter and an enrolled member of the party referred to in the petition. Democratic electors can only sign Democratic petitions and Republican electors can only sign Republican petitions. Each signer must personally sign his or her name in the "Signature of Elector" column and legibly print his or her name in the "Printed Name of Elector" column. Each signer shall add his residence, providing city, borough or township, with street name and number, if any, and add the date of signing, expressed in words or numbers, e.g., February 14, 2023 or 2/14/23. **Do not use ditto marks anywhere on the petition, the use of ditto ("") marks is grounds for rejecting the petition.**
- b. **Cross filing:** Candidates for Magisterial District Judge and School Director are permitted to cross-file. **Separate petitions must be filed for each Party if the candidate is cross filing. Do not combine them on one petition!**

The Statement of Circulator must be executed on each petition. For the office of School Director, the circulator must be an enrolled member of the same party referred to in the petition. However, the circulator does not have to be an enrolled member of the same party referred to in the nomination petitions for Magisterial District Judge.

3. STATEMENT OF CIRCULATOR

The Statement of Circulator must be signed **after** each nomination petition page is circulated. Do not execute until the nomination petition is completed. All petition circulators must **personally witness** each signature for the signatures to be valid if challenged.

All circulators must be registered voters of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and enrolled members of the party for which they are circulating. The Statement of Circulator shall comply with the requirements of Section 909 of the Pennsylvania Election Code (25 P.S. § 2869) and all other legal provisions pertaining to circulator statements. *(NOTE: The underlined portion does not apply to circulators for the office of Magisterial District Judge.)*

4. WAIVER OF EXPENSE REPORTING AFFIDAVIT (separate from petition)

- a. Candidates at the local level who do not operate with the assistance of a committee and who do not intend to receive or expend more than \$250 in a reporting period should complete the **Waiver of Expense Account Reporting Affidavit** which will alleviate the necessity of filing pre and post campaign expense reports.
- b. Candidates exceeding \$250 in receipts or expenditures in a reporting period or who operate with the assistance of a committee will be required to file pre and post campaign expense reports.

5. CANDIDATE AFFIDAVIT (separate from petition)

Candidates must sign and submit one **CANDIDATE AFFIDAVIT** per set of nomination petitions. (Offices that can cross-file must file two Candidate Affidavits).

The **CANDIDATE AFFIDAVIT** can be found and downloaded from the Election Services website or picked up at the Election Services office during office hours.

6. ETHICS STATEMENT (separate from petition)

A completed Statement of Financial Interest (Ethics Statement) should be present at the time of filing nomination petitions. Each candidate is responsible for making any additional copies.

- **ONE COPY MUST ACCOMPANY THE NOMINATION PETITION AT THE TIME OF FILING. NO NOMINATION PETITION TO APPEAR ON THE BALLOT FOR ELECTION SHALL BE ACCEPTED UNLESS THE NOMINATION PETITION HAS BEEN APPENDED TO A STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL INTEREST.**
- **ONE COPY OF THE ETHICS STATEMENT MUST BE FILED WITH THE LOCAL GOVERNING BODY NO LATER THAN MARCH 7, 2023. The Filer is responsible for making additional copies.**
 - (Example) A Muhlenberg Township Commissioner should file a copy of their ethics statement with the Secretary of Muhlenberg Township
 - (Example) A Muhlenberg School Director should file a copy of their ethics statement with the Muhlenberg School District

Questions on how to complete the Ethics Form or obtaining a copy of the form can be directed to the State Ethics Commission at 1-800-932-0936 or online at www.ethics.pa.gov.

7. FILING FEES

- a. No nomination petition will be accepted for filing in the office of Election Services unless it is accompanied by the proper filing fee (if applicable) **paid by cash, certified check, or money order** payable to the “County of Berks”. **No Personal checks will be accepted.**
- b. Once paid, filing fees will not be refunded for any reason (including candidate withdrawal). Offices permitted to cross-file are required to pay a filing fee (if applicable) for **each party’s** petition.

8. FILING YOUR PETITIONS

- a. Petitions must be filed in the Election Services office by 5:00 PM on the “Last day to circulate and file nomination petitions” deadline of **March 7, 2023**. We will accept people in line by 5:00 PM. If candidates choose to submit nomination petitions, they must include all required documents as well as the filing fee, if applicable. **POST MARKS DO NOT COUNT!** Both the Candidate Affidavit and Waiver of Expense Report must be notarized. **THE ELECTION SERVICES OFFICE DOES NOT EMPLOY A NOTARY PUBLIC.**
- b. Nomination petitions may consist of several sheets. If more than one sheet is used and is intended to be constituted as one petition, they shall be bound together when offered for filing, and each sheet shall be numbered consecutively, beginning with the number one (1) of _____, at the foot of each page.
- c. When filing petitions, if no obvious errors are found, the petition will be accepted at face value. We cannot determine what challenges an opponent may file to any petition or how any judge will rule on these challenges. **Our office does NOT provide legal advice on petition challenges.**
- d. **NOTICE:** Tax Collectors - Non-incumbents filing a nomination petition for the position of Tax Collector must include their criminal history information from the PSP through the Criminal History Record Information Act **with their petition**. The information must have been obtained within the year immediately prior to the filing of the petition. For example, if a petition is filed on 2/21/2023, the information must have been obtained between 2/21/2022 and 2/21/2023. Petitions **will not** be accepted without this report. For additional information visit the Pennsylvania State Tax Collectors Association web page www.pstca.org.
- e. **NOTICE:** Magisterial District Judge – A sitting Magisterial District Judge elected to the office shall not be required to file a nominating petition to run for the office of Magisterial District Judge but may instead file a certificate of nomination for reelection specifying the intent to seek reelection to the office. If a sitting Magisterial District Judge files a certificate of nomination for reelection, the sitting Magisterial District Judge may not challenge the nominating petition of another candidate for Magisterial District Judge.

PETITIONS WILL BE REJECTED FOR THE FOLLOWING REASONS:

- THE PETITION WAS **NOT** REPRODUCED CORRECTLY
- THERE ARE **NOT ENOUGH** SIGNATURES ON THE PETITION
- THE PETITION WAS CIRCULATED **PRIOR** TO FEBRUARY 14, 2023
- INCORRECT OR INCOMPLETE INFORMATION IN PETITION COLUMNS (EX. ZIP CODE INSTEAD OF DATE)
- DITTO MARKS AND/OR WHITEOUT ON PETITION
- ANY PART OF THE PETITION DOCUMENT IS NOT FILLED IN
- AN INCORRECT NOTARY STAMP, NO NOTARY STAMP, OR EXPIRED NOTARY COMMISSION ON THE CANDIDATE'S AFFIDAVIT OR WAIVER OF EXPENSE
- A COPY OF THE ETHICS FORM **DOES NOT** ACCOMPANY THE PETITION
- THE CANDIDATE'S AFFIDAVIT **DOES NOT** ACCOMPANY THE PETITION
- THE REQUIRED FILING FEE (IF APPLICABLE) **IS NOT** SUBMITTED
- NON-INCUMBENT TAX COLLECTORS **DO NOT** SUBMIT THE REQUIRED CRIMINAL HISTORY INFORMATION AT THE TIME OF FILING

IMPORTANT CAMPAIGN FINANCE INFORMATION

NOTE: ALL DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE IN THE EVENT OF PASSAGE OF ANY AMENDATORY LEGISLATION

2023 CAMPAIGN FINANCE REPORTING DATES

Type of Report	Cycle	Complete as of	Filing Deadline
2nd Friday Pre-Primary	Cycle 2	May 1, 2023	May 5, 2023
24-Hour Reporting (Daily)	Cycle 10	Starts May 2, 2023	Through and including May 16, 2023
30 Day Post-Primary	Cycle 3	June 5, 2023	June 15, 2023
2nd Friday Pre-Election	Cycle 5	October 23, 2023	October 27, 2023
24-Hour Reporting (Daily)	Cycle 11	Starts October 24, 2023	Through and including November 7, 2023
30 Day Post-Election	Cycle 6	November 27, 2023	December 7, 2023
2023 Annual Report	Cycle 7	December 31, 2023	January 31, 2024

- **POSTMARKS** - are acceptable as proof of timely filing when the report is postmarked by the U.S. Postal Service **NO later than the day prior to the filing deadline**; fax and e-mail copies are not acceptable.
- **PENALTIES** - In accordance with the Campaign Finance Reporting Law, those who file required reports after the filing deadline are assessed a late filing fee of \$20.00 per day for the first six days that the report is overdue, and \$10.00 per day thereafter, up to a maximum of \$250.00
- Candidates at the local level who do not operate with the assistance of a committee and who do not intend to receive or expend more than \$250 in a reporting period should complete the **Waiver of Expense Account Reporting Affidavit** which will alleviate the necessity of filing pre and post campaign expense reports. Candidates exceeding \$250 in receipts or expenditures in a reporting period or who operate with the assistance of a committee will be required to file pre and post campaign expense reports. Additional information can be obtained in the Election Services Office.
- **24 HOUR REPORTING** – Section 1628 of the Campaign Expense Reporting Law requires any candidate or political committee, authorized by a candidate and created solely for the purpose of influencing an

election on behalf of that candidate, which receives any contribution or pledge of \$500 dollars or more, **or** any person making an independent expenditure of \$500 or more after the final pre-election/pre-primary report has been deemed completed shall report such contribution or expenditure to the appropriate supervisor. The candidate, chairperson or treasurer of the political committee shall send the report of late contributions within 24 hours of receipt of the contribution. The same shall apply to persons making independent expenditures. The Board of Elections will accept the filing of 24-Hour Reports by facsimile at 610-478-6218 or e-mail at: elections@countyofberks.com. The filing of reports by facsimile or e-mail applies **only** to 24 Hour Reports. Late filing fees will be assessed for each day a 24-Hour Report is not filed.

- Purdon's Statutes Title 25 Section 3258 – Whenever any person makes an expenditure for the purpose of financing communications expressly advocating the election or defeat of a candidate, or ballot questions, through any broadcasting station, newspaper, magazine, outdoor advertising facility, direct mailing, or any other type of general public political advertising, such communication if authorized by the candidate, his authorized political committee or their agents, shall clearly and conspicuously state that the communication has been authorized. (Ex. Paid for by the name of committee ----- or paid for by the candidate.) All campaign material must also state that it has either been “Paid for by the (Name of Committee)” or “Paid for by the candidate”.
- POLITICAL COMMITTEE TREASURER – It is the treasurer's responsibility to file required committee reports. If you need a reporting form, you may print it from the Election Services website www.countyofberks.com/Elections. Forms are also available in the Election Services office.